

Forest Moor School

Menwith Hill Road, Darley, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 2RA

Inspection dates

16–17 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Middle leaders do not yet make as strong a contribution as they could to monitoring and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across the school. As a result, the progress made by pupils, particularly in key stages 3 and 4, is slower than it should be.
- Pupils in key stage 4 spend too much time attending alternative provision and too little time in school. As a result, they do not make as much academic progress as they should.
- The most able pupils do not make as much progress as they could because staff do not always set work which meets their needs accurately. This slows these pupils' progress over time.
- Staff do not always give pupils sufficient guidance to help them to improve their work. Too often praise and reward are given for completion of work rather than for an improvement in standards.
- Pupils are given too few opportunities to use and apply the skills they learn in order to deepen their knowledge and understanding through, for example, undertaking longer pieces of writing.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and leadership team have a very clear vision for the future of the school.
- Governors and senior leaders know the school well and have set clear and accurate targets for improvement.
- Many of the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report have been met.
- Systems have now been put in place to measure pupils' progress and set clear targets for improvement. Teachers are more consistently using this information to plan pupils' work.
- School leaders have a clear focus on pupils' attendance. Measures recently put in place have increased pupils' attendance significantly.
- The nurturing approach introduced by senior leaders to build pupils' confidence and resilience has improved behaviour across the school.
- Parents who shared their views with the inspection team were overwhelmingly positive about the school and the care and guidance given to their children.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - sharing the good practice already in place in order to develop a more consistent approach across the school
 - making sure that the most able pupils are clearly identified in each group and heightening the expectations of staff of what they can achieve, particularly in key stage 4
 - ensuring that feedback given to pupils enables them to understand how to improve their work and enables them to build their resilience to try once again to get it right.
- Accelerate pupils' progress and increase their levels of attainment by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to write for longer and in more depth
 - improving opportunities for pupils to use and apply the mathematical skills they have in order to deepen their knowledge and increase their levels of understanding
 - further increasing the amount of time key stage 4 pupils spend in school and broaden the curriculum offered to this group
 - developing closer links with external providers so that English and mathematics taught off-site enhance and contribute to pupils' progress overall.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - Further developing the role middle leaders play in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment within their subject areas or key stages.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The leadership team of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and head of inclusion have only been in post for a short period of time. Between them they have brought about change to the school at a fast pace. Despite the speed of change, they have continued to engage with staff who clearly share their vision for the future.
- Leaders' clear focus on continuous improvement is reflected in their perceptive and well-constructed development plan, which is under continuous scrutiny by governors.
- A key priority for leaders is further improvement to the provision in key stage 4. When the headteacher joined the school, the vast majority of key stage 4 pupils received all their educational provision from alternative providers. This has now been reduced to a maximum of two days per week per pupil, and alternative provision is now more closely monitored.
- Senior leaders have recently introduced a system which enables them to monitor the progress of each pupil in the school. Teaching staff measure pupils' progress and senior leaders track and monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving. Provision in key stage 2 is strong and work in books shows that pupils are now making good progress, often from very low starting points.
- Provision in English across the school is improving. A newly appointed teacher has recently transferred to the school from a mainstream secondary school. She has brought with her high expectations for all pupils and is in the process of putting in place a more demanding curriculum which is designed to raise both staff's and pupils' aspirations. However, the English teacher is aware that more needs to be done to develop pupils' reading and writing skills.
- The creative use of pupil premium funding has ensured that the personal development and welfare of disadvantaged pupils has improved since the last inspection. This use of this extra funding has also begun to improve their academic progress. However, the leadership team is aware that more needs to be done in order to ensure that outcomes for pupils overall are consistently good.
- The school receives funding for each pupil to meet their special educational needs. This funding is a direct part of the school's budget. It is used effectively to support all pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs in order that they may access the curriculum and make progress academically.
- Sports premium funding is effectively used to further develop pupils' keen interest in sport. For example, at the time of the inspection, pupils were involved in a tag rugby tournament against other schools locally. Pupils develop skills in other sports such as horse riding, which also contribute well to their overall health and well-being.
- Effective performance management systems enable senior leaders to evaluate the performance of staff across the school. Targets set link directly to the school development plan. This enables school leaders to reward staff for their good work and to ensure that the school continues to improve.

- A key focus for senior leaders has been improving pupils' behaviour. The introduction of a system designed to build pupils' self-esteem, self-worth and resilience has enabled staff to develop a better understanding of the reasons behind pupils' behaviour and attitudes. The reduction in the number of serious incidents is clear evidence of the success of the initiative. The highly positive feedback from both parents and pupils further evidences the success of the initiative.
- The curriculum in key stages 2 and 3 offers pupils a choice of subject areas and opportunities to develop socially and emotionally as well as academically. Outdoor education is central to this approach and trips away from the classroom, mountain biking, horse riding and climbing, contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and skills. Visits from outside organisations, including the police and fire service, help to develop pupils' understanding of law and order and fundamental British values.
- Parents spoken to and those who responded using Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were unanimous in their praise of the school and of recent changes brought about by senior leaders. Comments such as 'My child enjoys coming to school for the first time in his school career' and 'My son feels safe here and knows staff understand him' are typical of views held by others.
- The local authority has reduced the support that it gives the school because it believes that school leaders have a good capacity to keep on improving the school.

Governance

- The governing body knows the school well. Governors are eloquent, feisty and knowledgeable, and have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school
- While governors receive a regular and detailed report from the headteacher, they make it clear that this is not the only way they receive information about the school. Their frequent visits and discussions with staff enable them to see the whole picture.
- Minutes from governing body meetings show clearly how effectively they hold leaders to account, particularly around pupils' progress in the senior section of the school.
- Governors are clear that how the school uses its pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils is their responsibility. They also support the holistic way funding is spent, and recognise that it enables disadvantaged pupils to improve their behaviour and re-engage with learning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding pupils is a key priority for all members of staff who work in the school. Regular training sessions ensure that they are aware of current legislation and are clear about what to do for a child in need.
- Staff know pupils well. They have a good understanding of pupils' behaviour. This enables them to pick up on any changes which might signify distress or unhappiness,

and to take prompt action.

- The head of inclusion takes a lead in safeguarding, assisted by the headteacher. They have put in place a clear and logical system for referrals which enables staff to share their concerns effectively.
- The head of inclusion rightly recognises that safeguarding pupils involves working closely with families. Records show that her close working partnerships with other professionals have successfully supported families and pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving. However, it is not yet consistently good across the school because staff do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve in the time available.
- Work is not yet consistently planned for the most able pupils and staff do not always recognise their potential. As a result, the most able pupils are not always given sufficient challenge in the work they are set. For example, in mathematics, they often learn how to carry out calculations and geometric functions. However, they do not then get the opportunity to use and apply these by independently solving problems. This reduces opportunities to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Work planned does not always inspire pupils to engage with learning and when this happens their behaviour dips. Work in books demonstrates this clearly at times.
- Pupils do not always take pride in their work and this often goes unchallenged. Praise is often given for completing the task, but little explanation is evident about how to take learning to the next stage or how to improve a piece of written work.
- In practical lessons, such as food technology, opportunities are missed for pupils to use their writing skills, for example for recording the activities they have completed.
- In some areas of the school, particularly key stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is stronger. Staff have high expectations of both pupils' behaviour and academic achievement, and match learning more closely to the needs of pupils. Work in books clearly reflects these improvements and shows good progress for some pupils.
- However, this good practice is not replicated consistently across the school. Further work is needed in order to replicate the strong elements seen in key stage 2 in other areas of the school.
- Staff in all classrooms work very closely together to support the needs of pupils. Support staff are equally good at supporting both pupils' academic and behavioural needs. Discussions with staff during the inspection confirmed the strong team feeling which is, in the words of staff, 'the thread that runs through school and binds us all together'.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils and parents both agree that pupils' welfare and personal development are at the centre of all that the school does. Recent training has changed the approach staff have to managing pupils' behaviour. This more nurturing approach has improved pupils' behaviour and personal development across the school.
- Pupils spoken to told the inspection team that they enjoy coming to school and feel that staff keep them safe. They also commented on the good guidance given by staff through, for example, lessons on the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and on how to keep safe both inside and outside school.
- Pupils spoken to were clear about the different forms bullying can take. They demonstrated good knowledge on the dangers of online cyber bullying and sensitively described the effect homophobic bullying can have on growing teenagers. They were also clear that bullying of any sort was a rare occurrence in school because pupils 'understood each other'.
- Pupils feel that school prepares them well for transfer to the next phase in their education or the workplace through supported visits and 'taster sessions' in college. The success of this can be seen in the increase in numbers of pupils remaining in education, training or employment six months after leaving school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Incidents of difficult behaviour have significantly reduced across the school since the previous inspection. Use of physical restraint has correspondingly reduced.
- Staff have received extra training to help them to interpret pupils' behaviour and more accurately address their emotional needs. The development of 'my plan', an individual plan which enables pupils to recognise what actions to take when they are in crisis, has contributed to improved behaviour.
- Despite their high level of need, pupils respond well to staff and develop, often for the first time, strategies to enable them to control their own behaviour.
- Positive behaviour is rewarded at every opportunity and this is appreciated by pupils who learn to respect each other, staff and the school. At the time of the inspection, the school was clean, tidy and free of any evidence of graffiti in both corridors and classrooms.
- Pupils show mature attitudes to, and empathy with, others. Those spoken to recognise that everyone may at some time have a crisis. However, they also reported that difficult behaviour rarely stops learning because staff minimise incidents by concentrating on teaching attentive pupils. 'That way,' they commented, 'we all get on with our work and the pupil in crisis doesn't stop us from learning.'

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils often start school from very low starting points, having missed significant periods from their education. Some start towards the end of key stage 4. When they arrive, the school measures their current levels of attainment and uses the data sent by previous schools to measure their current baseline. This system, although robust, does not always take into account the results from previous national data. This sometimes reduces the effectiveness of targets set.
- School data shows that pupils in key stage 4 make slower progress than they should. This is due to the historical practice of using alternative provision for all pupils in this key stage. The headteacher quickly recognised that this reduces the progress of pupils, and has worked hard on developing a new curriculum which has at its core a stronger focus on academic qualifications delivered at the school.
- Key stage 4 pupils still attend alternative provision but this has been cut to a maximum of two days per week. This has increased the amount of time pupils spend in school and is slowly improving standards and levels of accreditation. It is planned that next year's Year 10 will receive all their education on the school site.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress in improving their personal development and welfare and their ability to manage their behaviour. They are also making academic progress equal to that of their peers. The progress in English and mathematics made by disadvantaged pupils requires improvement overall but is stronger in key stage 2 than in key stages 3 and 4.
- Current pupils in key stage 3 are making stronger progress than those last year. However, this is not yet consistently good overall. Work in books in key stage 2 shows marked improvement and, generally, these pupils are making good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils overall make similar progress in mathematics and English. However, in both subjects, opportunities are missed to accelerate pupils' progress and deepen their knowledge. For example, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to write longer pieces of work. Where they do get the opportunity, they often write well but sometimes lack the confidence and resilience in their writing needed for higher-level examinations.
- Mathematics books show a similar picture where pupils learn how to carry out calculations and gain skills. However, they have too few opportunities to put these skills into action by using and applying them, and deepening their understanding.
- The school's system for collecting information on pupils' progress is embedded and staff use it to assess pupils' progress and plan the next steps in their learning. However, the information does not clearly identify separately the progress of the most able pupils. As a result, staff do not always plan effectively for this group and this slows their progress over time.

School details

Unique reference number	121780
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10032010

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	9–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Phillip Turnpenny
Headteacher	Marc Peart
Telephone number	01423 779 232
Website	www.forestmoor.n-yorks.sch.uk
Email address	admin@forestmoor.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health issues, all of whom have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). Pupils travel from across North Yorkshire. Approximately a quarter of pupils have additional needs, for example autistic spectrum disorder.
- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and head of inclusion have been appointed. Several members of staff have left.
- The number of pupils has increased and is continuing to increase.
- The school currently uses the following alternative providers: Ad Astra, Harrogate Training Service, Nidderdale High School, Open Arms, Country Classrooms, Hilltop Farm and The Toolbox Project.
- This year, the local authority has reduced the levels of support given to the school in

recognition of the increasing capacity of the leadership team.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in classrooms across the school. Some observations were carried out with members of the senior leadership team.
- The lead inspector visited Country Classrooms, an alternative provider based in Bilborough, York.
- A range of school documents, including safeguarding documentation, pupils' progress information and the school's curriculum planning, were analysed by the inspection team.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior leaders, middle leaders, members of staff, the vice-chair of the governing body and three other governors.
- Informal meetings were held with a small number of parents at the start of the day, and the inspection team took into account the feedback from six parents given via Ofsted's online texting service and 11 parents who responded to Parent View.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Hugh Steele

Ofsted Inspector

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